



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



School Name Fairford Academy Barnehurst

School Address Fairford Avenue
Bexley
London
United Kingdom
DA7 6QP

Head/Principal Aman Aujla

Assessment Date 6th July 2026

Assessor Heather Coward

Sources of Evidence:

- IQM Self Evaluation Report document
- School Website
- Adaptive Teaching and Learning booklet
- Challenge Partners Review Report
- School Development Plan
- Continuous Professional Development training schedule
- Pupils' books
- Learning walk in EYFS, KS1, KS2 and Specialist Resource Provision
- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy

Meetings Held with:

- Head of School / Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo)/ IQM Lead
- Deputy Headteacher (DHT)
- Executive Headteacher
- Assistant Headteachers (AHT)
- Pupils
- Academic Learning Mentor
- Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Parents
- Chair of Governors



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Overall Evaluation

Fairford Academy is a large primary school in the London Borough of Bexley with 460 pupils currently on roll. Classes in Years 4 to 6 operate as a three-form entry, while Reception to Year 3 currently have two classes per year group due to the declining pupil roll across London. The school serves a diverse community, with 31.3% of pupils receiving Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support, including 28 pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), 39.3% eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) and 30% speaking English as an Additional Language (EAL). These are all significantly above national averages. As one of two schools within the Illuminate Minds Trust since 2015, Fairford benefits from the many professional development opportunities the Trust provides and the support it offers.

Throughout the 2 day assessment, a strong sense of warmth, welcome and belonging were felt. Relationships matter at Fairford Academy underpinning everything they do with the Head of School describing the school as "a place where the door is open to everyone and everyone belongs." From the moment the school gate opens, pupils and families are welcomed by members of smiling and emotionally available staff, including the Senior Leadership Team. This has been a deliberate choice with morning greeting posters displayed on every classroom door asking pupils, "how would you like to be greeted today".

When asked what makes Fairford special, one pupil said, "The teachers because they are so jolly and so are the students. On the doors they greet you with a high 5 or fist pump. It makes you feel calm." A unique and thoughtful gesture is the handwritten postcards every pupil receives from their teacher each holiday letting them know they are looking forward to seeing them.

During the summer holidays, pupils receive a postcard from their new teacher. This reinforces the message that every child is recognised and a valued member of the Fairford community. Staff echoed these views, emphasising that every child is noticed and made to feel that they belong. This commitment has also been recognised externally, with Challenge Partners commenting on the school's "strong sense of belonging."

From my time at Fairford Academy, I observed a deep commitment to ensuring pupils from all groups are included and represented in the life of the school. Difference, diversity and uniqueness are embraced and celebrated through displays, texts and learning themes. For example, pupils explore influential figures such as Rosa Parks, Frida Kahlo and Mary Seacole. The school library holds books that reflect a range of cultures, families and religions and events such as Multicultural Day provide an opportunity for pupils to celebrate and share their heritage. One pupil proudly commented, "I'm part Belgian so I wore my flag and shared waffles. We ate Turkish Delight and Jollof Rice. It was amazing."

The learning environment further reinforces inclusion and walking around the school with leaders gave the 'inclusive feel' that so many stakeholders had spoken about. The school has developed a clear Learning Environment Checklist to support teachers in creating highly inclusive and consistent classrooms. Every learning space includes Recognition Boards, Class Charters, engaging book corners, washing lines displaying current learning, English and mathematics working walls, and curriculum displays presented on uniform hessian-backed boards. The newly developed sensory garden, has been partly funded by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is accessible for all pupils to use for regulation and includes features such as a teepee tent, climbing wall, musical wall and spinners.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Recognising that many children enter school with low levels of speech and language, leaders have created a language rich environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Communication and vocabulary is explicitly developed through child led learning, purposeful adult interactions and carefully planned provision. Neutral and natural furniture and resources in the classroom result in a calm environment with clearly labelled resources and self-registering creating independence.

The outdoor space is an extension of the classroom with specific areas including construction, mud kitchen and reading shed. The significant focus and investment over the last 3 years in EYFS is evident with the end of key stage data rising from 53% in 2023 to 80% this year.

A very special feature of Fairford Academy is its amazing Forest School provision led by their passionate and knowledgeable Forest School Lead. This incredible space includes a mud kitchen, fire pit, a musical area from recycled materials, along with a new log cabin. All pupils attend sessions here where they get the opportunity to, take risks through safe whittling and fire building and develop fine and gross motor skills through learning knot skills and using hammers, and tree climbing. They build teamwork, resilience, environmental responsibility and self-regulation.

Pupils love their Forest School sessions and spoke enthusiastically: "I love getting muddy and digging in the mud kitchen. It's taught me to respect nature and life skills" while another explained, "I find it relaxing and calming. It's sensory. If you're stressed it makes you calm".

Support for pupils' wellbeing is a significant strength of the school and is exemplified by the development of its nurture provision. Run by the Academic Learning Mentor who has completed Nurture Accredited Training, this is a safe space for pupils experiencing trauma and with more complex Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Pupils are identified through Raising Standards Meetings and SEND referrals from teachers.

Underpinned by the 6 principles of nurture, pupils spend their afternoons here where they continue to access a broad curriculum while developing the skills and confidence needed to thrive. Focussed activities include learning to share and regulate, and social stories with opportunities for unstructured play. Learning recorded in personal journals demonstrates progress pupils make here and these are shared with families during learning showcases. The Academic Learning Mentor explained that the provision has led to noticeable improvements in pupils' attendance, engagement and readiness to learn.

Leaders have responded positively to the changing needs of the local community through the recent opening of a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) for pupils with Autism and SEMH needs. Numbers will increase from 14 to 40 places in September 2026. During the IQM Assessment, the Head of School shared the ongoing building work transforming the former hall into five new classrooms.

The expanded SRP will include a dedicated playground, sensory room and nurture classroom. This will be renamed Verity House and has been designed as a 'school within a school', with pupils remaining members of the mainstream community and accessing learning across both provisions where appropriate. With pupils describing their school as "amazing", "unique", "joyful", "respectful" and "fabulous", there is no doubt that Fairford Academy fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. I recommend that the school be awarded the Inclusive School Award and be reassessed in three years' time.

I also recommend that the school should consider applying for Centre of Excellence status subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

Assessor: Heather Coward

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

Joe McCann

Joe McCann MBA NPQH
Chief Executive Officer
Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

There is a strong commitment to inclusion at Fairford Academy which is deeply embedded within every aspect of school life. The school's values of Ambition, Teamwork, Resilience and Respect, together with the aim to deliver 'Excellence Every Day', underpin their inclusive culture and are visible throughout the school. These values are celebrated weekly through Class Dojos and celebration assemblies and are lived by all pupils and staff. Throughout the IQM assessment, there was a clear consistency in the language used by all stakeholders when describing what inclusion means to them. This was well articulated by the Executive Headteacher who explained, "Inclusion is never a bolt on. It's our culture here. We live it and breathe it. It's what we do here at Fairford."

Teachers and support staff spoke passionately and proudly about Fairford, describing their school as a place that is "safe," "welcoming," and "an oasis". They believe strongly that every child should be seen and heard and recognised as individuals. Strong relationships with pupils and their families are seen as fundamental to inclusion, with staff consistently prioritising wellbeing thereby fulfilling the school motto of "Happy and Bright"

Pupils strongly echoed these findings and confidently explained that inclusion means "everybody is included and no one is left out," and that "everyone has the same rights, treated equally and given the chance to do what they want." Their understanding is rooted in the inclusive curriculum which includes recent work on UNICEF's Children's Rights. This broadens their understanding of diversity and the experiences of others across the world. Pupils shared examples of putting their values into practice, for example supporting a new pupil from France by learning French to help her feel welcomed and included.

Leaders, teachers and support staff take full responsibility for pupils with additional needs. The Head of School is also the SENDCo and since being in post from 2023 has successfully led a whole school transformation of SEND systems and inclusive practice. By introducing SEND Passports and implementing the EDUKEY platform to record provision and monitor progress, there are now systematic and effective processes in place. Training and the Trust SEND referral pathway have equipped staff to quickly identify barriers to learning which is followed by detailed action planning and appropriate support. Evidence based interventions, tailored to individual needs and guided by external professionals, are in place. These include ELSA, Draw and Talk, Lego Therapy and Precision Teaching. Fairford Academy also invests in specialist support, including an Educational Psychologist, a Speech and Language Therapist who is in school 3 days a week, and a new dyslexia screening programme.

Effective transition processes are in place at Fairford Academy. To support pupils moving into new year groups and mid-term admissions, transition books sharing photos of key people, their new classroom, toilets and playground are produced for every pupil, not only those with SEND. These are also available on the school website. A staff meeting is used for handover meetings before the start of each academic year to discuss the needs of all learners within their new classes with teachers using EduKey and SEND passports to share information. The school has strong relationships with local secondary colleagues and there are opportunities throughout the year for Year 6 pupils to visit their new school. Pupils spoke positively about the recent transition workshop provided by Big Foot Arts with one commenting, "it isn't so bad going to secondary school and now I'm excited. The workshop helped us to overcome our fears."



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Next Steps

- To develop the Specialist Resource Provision, ensuring it continues to meet the needs of pupils through high-quality provision, effective practice and strong integration within the wider school community.
- To further enhance pupil voice across the school, with a particular focus on pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups.



Element 2 - Leadership, Management and Accountability

The school has a strong and effective Senior Leadership Team (SLT) who are committed to inclusion ensuring that is embedded across all aspects of school life. Led by an Executive Headteacher and Head of School, leaders have established a distributed leadership model that develops leadership capacity at all levels. The school has been part of the Illuminate Minds Trust since 2015 and benefits from close collaboration with their partner school. Together they share expertise through joint weekly staff meetings, learning walks, book moderations and policies. The Trust is led by highly experienced senior leaders in SEND and SEMH which is reflected in its SEND Strategy and “no excuses” approach.

The Chair of Governors described the leadership team as being open to challenge, welcoming questions, new ideas and constructive criticism as part of their commitment to continuous school improvement. The Governing Board have a secure understanding of inclusion and the school’s priorities. They are very involved in the life of the school and are well informed through regular governor meetings and visits which include learning walks, assemblies and link governor meetings. Training is comprehensive and ongoing, ensuring that governance remains effective and informed.

Inclusion is woven throughout the School Development Plan which is built around their ambition for “Excellence Every Day”. Each priority is linked to measurable success criteria for pupils, staff and parents, and progress and impact is evaluated through a RAG-rated monitoring process. The quality of inclusive practice is monitored through Termly Raising Standards Meetings, learning walks, scrutinising books and pupil voice, and are used to improve the quality of provision for all pupils.

With nearly 40% of pupils entitled to the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG), leaders carefully monitor the gap between these pupils and their peers. Funding supports both academic and enrichment such as booster classes, nurture provision, ELSA, subsidised trips and music lessons. The school also invests in the Brilliant Club which enables pupils to work with a university tutor on an academic project to raise their aspirations and awareness of higher education. Pupils recently celebrated their achievements by graduating at Goldsmiths University.

The Trust understands that their pupils can only succeed if they are taught by staff who are well trained and experienced. Therefore, there is a commitment to high-quality, continuous professional development (CPD) for all staff. An annual programme of universal training runs alongside staff’s own personal training and career pathway. Weekly trust CPD sessions are informed by current research and trends such as the 2026 Schools White Paper. External keynote speakers have presented at Insets on themes such as belonging, unconscious bias and removing barriers to learning. Staff are encouraged to share their own expertise, with specialists delivering training in areas including nurture and Forest School. The school has invested in the IRIS Connect instructional coaching platform enabling teachers and support staff to record short clips of their teaching for self-evaluation and coaching. Career progression is nurtured and several Teaching Assistants have completed teaching training through the salaried teacher training route at Fairford. Middle leaders are developed with staff encouraged to access the National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) and given opportunities to shadow senior leaders, attend leadership meetings and work alongside the School Improvement Partner.

Staff wellbeing is a priority. All staff spoken to feel supported and valued, describing an open-door culture where concerns are listened to and acted upon. Staff appreciate the regular informal check-ins, the Friday Shout Outs and personal thank-you emails and handwritten cards from members of the SLT and Trust CEO. Workload is considered by



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



leaders. For example, additional release time for subject leadership, the minimum but effective marking and feedback policy and investment in AI technology. The Wellbeing Working Group and staff surveys inform future actions.

There is an effective culture of safeguarding and a clear understanding that this is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive regular training with termly updates including Prevent, Domestic Violence and Online Safety. Strong relationships result in an environment where pupils feel safe. As one pupil explained, "There are lots of safeguarding people and posters around the school. If you ever feel unsafe you know who to go to. They wear orange high viz so you can spot them easily."

Next Steps

- To continue to invest in staff development, particularly in relation to adaptive teaching, SEND, wellbeing and trauma-informed practice, so that all staff remain equipped to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse school community.
- The Head of School to support the new SENDCo as they transition into the role in September, ensuring continuity of provision and the continued development of the school's inclusive practice.



Element 3 - Curriculum (Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaptation)

Fairford Academy has developed a bespoke, ambitious and highly engaging curriculum which provides 'Excellence Every Day'. The curriculum is visually represented as a London Underground-style map with the Personal Development and Educational Support 'lines' running throughout. Through a thematic approach, subjects are taught discretely, with progression documents ensuring that knowledge and skills are carefully sequenced and systematically built over time. Prior learning is intentionally and continually revisited to enable learners to build upon new learning and to transfer it into their long-term memory.

Exciting themes include Does the Crime fit the Rhyme, London's Burning and Do Rainforests Matter. Every unit begins with a 'Super Start' to hook pupils' curiosity with activities such as cooking, dressing up or art followed by a 'Marvellous Middle', often involving an educational visit or visitor. Learning culminates in a 'Fabulous Finish' where pupils showcase their learning to their families.

There is an emphasis on increasing pupils' cultural capital, and the curriculum is enriched through a half termly trip or visitor. Pupils shared their most memorable experience which included visits to the Tower of London and the Imperial War Museum and an Aboriginal storyteller. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs ensures pupils can pursue their interests with leaders closely monitoring participation, particularly for those entitled to the PPG and with SEND, to ensure equality of opportunity. The school invests in its music provision with specialist teachers enabling all pupils to learn a musical instrument during their time at Fairford. Additional opportunities include singing at the O2 with Young Voices choir and classrooms exploring different cultures through a different music themes each half term.

Leaders identified reading and writing as key priorities following a dip in outcomes and therefore focused on these areas over the last few years. They introduced the Master Reader programme to focus on vocabulary and the teaching of fundamental key reading skills through engaging texts. The implementation of Little Wandle phonics scheme has led to an increase from 67% in 2023 to 81% in this year phonics screener results. Changes to the writing curriculum means pupils now write about what they know such as a familiar text or curriculum theme. This reduces cognitive load, enabling pupils to focus on developing their writing skills. Evidence in pupils' books demonstrates progress pupils have made in both quality and stamina of writing.

The curriculum is carefully monitored and evaluated through learning walks and book scrutiny. Subject leaders carry out pupil voice activities to monitor progress and enjoyment. Pupils' work in books and on displays around the school demonstrate that lessons are creative and planned carefully to engage and motivate the pupils to learn. Therefore, all pupils make progress across the curriculum.

Next Steps

- To develop a personalised bespoke curriculum for the SRP to launch in September.
- To develop bespoke curriculum for the new 2 year old provision in line with the changes to the EYFS Framework



Element 4 - Teaching and Learning, Learning Environment, Planning Resources and Pedagogy

Fairford Academy effectively delivers their inclusive curriculum through a research-based pedagogy, high expectations, and adaptive teaching. During the assessment days, I had the pleasure of visiting all classrooms and learning spaces to see teaching and learning in action. Leaders are clear about high quality teaching and teaching and learning approaches are consistent. Lessons follow an embedded structure familiar to pupils, incorporating retrieval practice, explicit teaching and structured talk tasks.

Staff are well equipped and highly skilled to meet all the needs of the pupils in their classroom therefore is a secure understanding of adaptive teaching across the school. As one teacher explained, "Teachers here know the children well. We prepare our lessons and provide the right resource so all pupils can achieve regardless of need"

The majority of pupils are working towards the same learning objective while receiving the appropriate level of support or challenge. The adaptive teaching model developed as a Trust includes a useful SEND toolkit based upon the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) 5 a day principles. Staff ensure that the lowest attaining pupils make progress through flexible groupings, explicit vocabulary teaching and high-quality modelling. Across the school, pupils benefit from carefully chosen scaffolds including Widgits, vocabulary banks, sentence stems, task management boards, manipulatives, and Colourful Semantics. Challenge is provided through higher-order questioning, problem-solving activities and opportunities for deeper thinking.

Adaptive teaching is further strengthened through the use of technology. Every classroom has a visualiser for explicit modelling and recording boards are used for pupils to verbally share ideas, demonstrating their understanding. Chromebooks are integrated into lessons, supporting research, collaboration, independent learning and access to digital resources. This year, teachers have participated in a pilot of Class Labs, an artificial intelligence platform that supports lesson planning by producing adapted questions, vocabulary and resources.

The Trust's approach to support pupils with additional needs is underpinned by the principle of 'provision not people'. Therefore, Teaching Assistants are deployed to add value to what teachers do, not to replace them. Their role reflects the principles outlined in the EEF's Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants guidance, promoting independence rather than over-reliance on adult support.

Leaders monitor the effective implementation of teaching and learning through regular developmental learning walks, book looks and speaking to pupils rather than waiting for formal observations. A shared monitoring document enables leaders to identify strengths, celebrate effective practice and provide timely support where needed.

The consistent approach of quality first teaching was very evident during the learning walk and when looking through the pupil's books. Teachers clearly have high expectations and pupils were all engaged and focused on their learning. Pupils spoke confidently about the strategies that help them learn independently, explaining how Widigit sheets, sentence starters and peer support enable them to succeed.

Next Steps

- To embed adaptive teaching strategies to ensure all pupils can access ambitious curriculum content whilst maintaining high expectations.
- To continue to strengthen collaboration between mainstream and Specialist Resource Provision staff to share expertise and further develop inclusive pedagogical practice.



Element 5 - Assessment

Assessment is rigorous, purposeful and used effectively throughout the school to improve outcomes for all pupils. A combination of formative and summative assessment approaches is used to monitor pupil understanding, identify misconceptions and adapt teaching accordingly. Teachers make effective use of live marking, whiteboards, cold calling, mini plenaries and questioning to check pupils' understanding during lessons and address misconceptions quickly. Pupils are actively involved in the assessment process through self-assessment against learning objectives and success criteria.

Over the last year, Fairford Academy has embedded the use of assessment for learning, adapting their marking and feedback to emphasise effective feedback. Teachers now use 'Teacher Conferencing' stickers in books to record when feedback has been given. Pupils are given time to reflect, respond to feedback and edit their work using purple pens. Opportunities for peer assessment are given in lessons, with pupils sharing what they like about their partner's work and suggesting next steps for improvement. There was evidence of this in books in every year group and across the curriculum. Teachers reflected that these approaches have encouraged pupils to engage actively with feedback, reflect on their learning and to independently make improvements to their work.

Pre- and end-of-unit assessments in maths and science, alongside termly summative PiXL assessments in reading, writing and maths, provide leaders and teachers with a clear picture of pupils' attainment and progress. The PiXL programme benchmarks data against the national average and provides useful gap analysis which informs future teaching and interventions. This informed a change to the maths lesson structure with all lessons now beginning with arithmetic. To support writing assessment, teachers have trialled the AIR Writing Assistant app this year where pupils' writing is uploaded and analysed using the KS2 Writing Framework. This has been used successfully alongside writing moderation with the local authority and partner school.

At half termly Raising Standards Meetings, leaders and the year group team review attainment and progress and monitor the progress of vulnerable groups including those with SEND and those entitled to PPG. The school also uses an intersectionality approach that provides teachers with a deeper understanding of pupils experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, enabling support to be carefully targeted. These meetings enable staff to identify learning gaps and plan appropriate next steps. The outcomes of these discussions inform subsequent lesson planning, interventions and classroom practice. These meetings also lead to whole-school improvements to teaching and learning. For example, leaders use the discussions to identify a whole class focus for early morning work, ensuring that this time is purposeful and responsive to pupils' needs. As a result, early morning activities now include fine motor development such as dough disco in Year 4, and arithmetic practice.

With a range of interventions happening at Fairford, the SENDCo uses appropriate assessment tools, including Boxall Profiles, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs), Leuven Scales, speech and language screeners and EduKey provision maps, to measure progress and monitor the impact of interventions such as ELSA, Draw and Talk, Forest School and nurture provision.

Next Steps

- To further develop assessment approaches within the Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) to demonstrate progress in communication, independence, emotional regulation and personal development.
- To develop assessment approaches within the 2 year old provision



Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

Exemplary behaviour and positive attitudes to learning were demonstrated by all pupils during the assessment visit. Since 2023, leaders have transformed their approach to behaviour by moving away from a traffic light behaviour system towards a trauma-informed, relational model. The school's Relationships and Behaviour Policy is underpinned by the principles of 'Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect' from Trauma Informed Schools UK (TISUK), alongside restorative practice. Professional development for all staff, including training led by external speakers, has equipped staff with a deep understanding that behaviour is a form of communication.

Secure relationships are at the heart of the school's behaviour approach. At the start of every year, classes work with their adults to agree on the Class Charter which is displayed and referred to throughout the year. Disputes between pupils or individual behaviour incidents are managed through restorative conversations and staff carry restorative justice prompt cards to support these. Daily staff debriefs enable adults to share information and pupil successes and to raise concerns. Pupils feel valued and appreciate the many opportunities there are to celebrate success through Dojo awards, positive points, Friday celebration assemblies and the special Headteacher Awards.

The learning environment supports the emotional wellbeing of all pupils and whole school approaches are in place. Each classroom has a Regulation Station, a visual timetable, the Five-Point Scale and Now and Next boards, and every year group has access to a sensory trail which pupils have been trained to use independently. A super sensory trail has been created in a corridor with floor stickers showing pupils the different elements of Alerting, Organising and Calming.

At the beginning of each year, pupils explore emotions through the film Inside Out, developing a shared language to discuss feelings and identify appropriate regulation strategies. Pupils confidently articulated how these strategies support their wellbeing. One pupil explained, "We have a regulation station that can cheer people up if you're sad or angry. Five-finger breathing and box breathing calm you down."

The schools' curriculum also promotes healthy minds and wellbeing. Every Monday morning classes meet for circle time where they discuss the week ahead and set a whole class weekly target. This is written on the Recognition Board and reviewed during Friday circle time session where pupils also share successes and achievements. Weekly assemblies link to the school's values alongside Fundamental British Values and protected characteristics and celebrate local, national and global events. This is further strengthened through the school's journey towards the Bronze UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award.

One of the many highlights of my visit was meeting with the pupils. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their confidence and leadership skills through roles such as Pupil Parliament and Kindness Ambassadors. Pupils proudly shared the impact they have made through organising community events, meeting with their MP, raising money for Women's Aid and introducing table tennis to the playground. They also enjoy judging corridor displays and giving feedback to teachers.

Everyone takes responsibility for attendance at Fairford Academy and their strategy is underpinned by the school's relational approach. Pupils are encouraged to come to school through incentives such as attendance and punctuality awards but also an exciting and engaging curriculum. Attendance is carefully monitored, with targeted support tailored for individual families. There has been a recent focus on helping to remove barriers for pupils experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



through Bexley's ESBA training and toolkit and leaders have a strong partnership with their Education Welfare Officer who visits regularly.

Next Steps

- To develop greater pupil leadership opportunities to enhance pupil voice and participation in school improvement for example Language Ambassadors.
- To embed staff expertise in trauma-informed practice and emotionally available adult approaches.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

The partnership Fairford Academy has with its parents, carers and guardians is notable strength and there is a deep commitment to ensure all families feel listened to, included and valued. The school involves parents in the life of the school as much as possible and provides plenty of opportunities for families to come into school. This year, Fairford has introduced half termly learning showcases as part of the curriculum 'Fabulous Finishes'.

Leaders reflected that these have been very popular and have helped to raise parental engagement enabling families to celebrate their child's achievements and gain a deeper understanding of classroom learning. Another well attended event was the Reading Evening where pupils were invited to come to school in the evening in their pyjamas and share books with their parents. Gaining a parent voice is a priority for leaders. Feedback is sought through questionnaires and more informal Class Dojo surveys on events such as Sports Day, extracurricular clubs and learning showcases.

Information is regularly shared to help parents to understand how to support learning and wellbeing at home. Parent workshops are regularly offered in key curriculum areas, including reading, phonics, and maths, alongside sessions focusing on emotional regulation, the Five Point Scale and online safety. SEND coffee mornings and SEND surgeries provide parents with direct access to the SENDCo and regular newsletters signpost families to additional support, such as Bexley's workshops for girls with autism, Family Wellbeing Services and the Mental Health Support Team (MHST).

Targeted support for families is also in place. The Early Intervention Team works closely with parents to identify and address barriers to learning and wellbeing, ensuring support is tailored appropriately. Parents also shared the practical support they receive, with one commenting how office staff help with completing forms because of their dyslexia.

The school communicates effectively with parents. There is a genuine open door policy where parents feel comfortable to approach staff with any concerns. The introduction of Class Dojo for instant communication has been appreciated by parents. Alongside teachers sharing photos of pupils' achievement, parents share information about home life, including if their child has had an unsettled morning, enabling staff to respond appropriately.

Pupil attainment and progress, and wellbeing, is shared at termly parent consultation meetings. For pupils with SEND, EduKey provides parents with access to Learning Plans and Pupil Passports, supporting ongoing communication and collaboration. For all communication, translation and interpretation services are accessed when required to support effective communication with families.

A committed Parent Teacher Association (PTA) organises fundraising events throughout the year to support school improvement and enrichment opportunities. Events have included movie nights, the Christmas Fair and most recently the popular Inflatable Day where the whole community were invited. Funds raised contribute to the purchase of resources, equipment and experiences that enhance learning and inclusion such as the sensory garden, books, football kits and classroom supplies.

Parents spoken to during the IQM day were extremely positive about the school. They described teachers as approachable, supportive and responsive, commenting that they "listen and come back to us immediately" and "make time to speak to me." Parents feel able to "open up and speak without being judged".

The school's inclusive ethos was highlighted, and parents feel that pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life, including educational visits and assemblies. One parent of a pupil attending the Specialist Resource Provision spoke proudly about



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



the significant progress their child had made, particularly in developing confidence within small groups before successfully accessing learning in the mainstream classroom.

Next Steps

- To continue to strengthen opportunities for meaningful parent voice through surveys, consultations and focus groups.
- Further strengthen links with Women's Aid.



Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

Links with the local and wider community are wide-ranging. A free toddler group was set up for the community to address the gap left by the closure of local Sure Start provision providing parents the opportunity to network while accessing activities such as baby massage and sensory play. There is a relationship with the local nursing home where Reception class visit at Christmas. One of the school's most significant contributions to the local community is hosting the annual Bexley Paralympic Games Festival.

This free event is in its fourth year and welcomes around 130 pupils with additional needs from 16 schools providing opportunities for pupils to participate in sporting activities including sitting volleyball, goalball and Boccia. Parents explained that this event provides a supportive environment where pupils feel emotionally safe to participate and succeed teaching children that "it is okay to be different". Leaders will further expand community provision through a summer holiday club and the opening of a new 2 year old nursery in September 2026.

Fairford Academy plays a key outward-facing role, welcoming visitors and sharing best practice. Leaders actively seek external validation and continuously refine school improvement through collaboration with Challenge Partners and the School Improvement Partner. There are many opportunities for staff to visit other schools, attend cluster meetings and contribute their own expertise to Trust wide and regional networks. Fairford Academy is also a Lead Delivery Partner for Goldsmiths, University of London's teacher training programme. Moving forward, the Executive Headteacher has recently joined the Bexley Oracy Network.

The school makes use of all available resources in the local community and beyond to enhance learning opportunities and curriculum experience. Charlton Athletic Football Club provides coaching opportunities and experiences such as playing at the stadium. Pupils also benefit from regular visits from Bigfoot Arts, while the school choir participates in the Young Voices concert at The O2. Partnerships with local secondary schools to support transition, while visitors have included the local Member of Parliament (MP) and Women's Aid Bexley.

The global dimension of the school's work is strengthened by its curriculum. Pupils enjoy the whole school termly projects such as the World Cup project, where they investigate different countries, cultures and traditions. Lyfta lessons enable pupils to develop an understanding of the "life beyond Bexley" without leaving the classroom through immersive videos and live lessons. Pupils learn about the lives of children across the globe, comparing experiences, exploring similarities and differences and developing empathy and cultural understanding. During the review, pupils in both Year 1 and Year 5 were learning about the development of football in Norway.

Next Steps

- To develop a 2 year old provision that supports the needs of the local community, strengthening engagement with children and their families from the earliest stage.
- To expand Diversity Day into a whole-school annual event welcoming the local community.
- To increase family and community participation in school events, workshops and celebrations to further strengthen relationships and community cohesion.